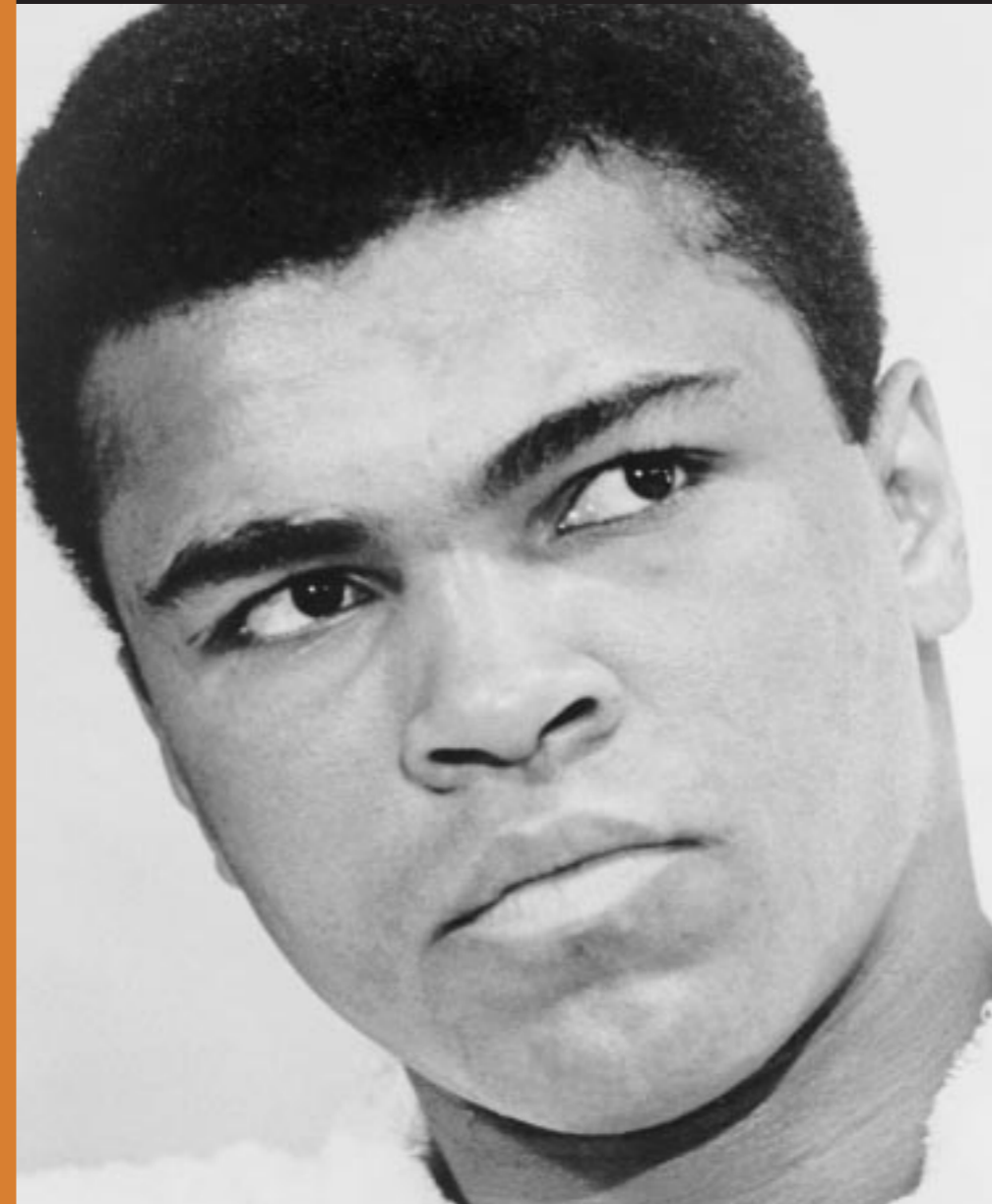


Muslim Pioneers, Past and Present



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Introduction

In recent years, Islamophobia has been on the increase ever since 9/11 and the media have often portrayed Muslims in a negative manner. What is often overlooked in mainstream Western discourses are the positive contributions made to society by Muslims in a whole variety of realms.

The v2424 placement volunteers at Football Unites, Racism Divides (FURD), themselves making a constructive contribution to their local community through volunteering, have researched the lives of just a few of the many Muslims who have had a positive impact on society.

From science and engineering, through political campaigning to sporting achievement, this booklet just scrapes the surface of what Muslims have achieved from the past to the present day.

It is hoped that readers will be inspired to find out more about the achievements of Muslims throughout the world as well as being more aware of the diverse backgrounds of those with whom we regularly interact, whether from afar through media constructions or closer to home in our own neighbourhoods and communities.

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Abu Ja'far Mohammed Ibn Musa Al-Khwarizmi

The Father of Algebra



Introduction

He was ancient Persian mathematician, born 780AD and lived to 850AD, he made major contributions to mathematics, astronomy and geography. He is also credited with developing a systematic and logical approach to solving linear and quadric equations, which gave rise to the discipline of algebra.

In the twelfth century, Latin translations of his work on the Indian numerals introduced the decimal positional number system to the Western world. In Renaissance Europe he was considered the original inventor of algebra.

Contributions

He made contributions to mathematics, geography, astronomy and cartography which established the basis for innovation in algebra and trigonometry. His systematic approach to solving linear and quadric equations led to algebra, a word derived from his 830AD book on the subject, 'The Compendious Book on Calculation by Completion and Balancing'.

He was the first man to introduce the decimal system in mathematics.

He was the founder of several branches and basic concepts of mathematics. He developed in detail the trigonometric tables containing the sine functions which were later extrapolated to tangent functions.

He also developed the calculus of two errors which led him to the concept of differentiation. He even refined the geometric representation of conic sections.

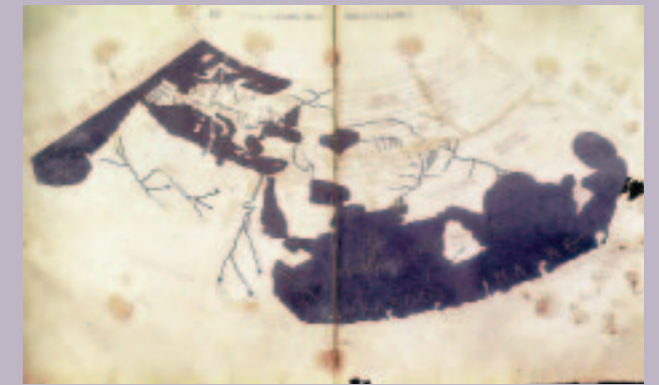
Algebra

Al-Kitab al-mukhtasar fi hisab al-jabr wa-l-muqabala - 'The Compendious Book on Calculation by Completion and Balancing' is a mathematical book written approximately 830CE. The book was written with the encouragement of the Caliph al-Ma'mun as a popular work on calculation and is replete with examples and applications to a wide range of problems in trade, surveying and legal inheritance. The term algebra is derived from the name of one of the basic operations with equations (al-jabr, meaning completion or subtracting a number from both sides of sides of the equation) described in this book. The book was translated in Latin as Liber algebrae et almucabala by Robert of Chester (Segovia 1145) hence 'algebra' and also by Gerard of Cremona. A unique Arabic copy is kept at Oxford and was translated in 1831 by F. Rosen. A Latin translation is kept in Cambridge.



Astronomy

Al-Khwarizmi's 'Astronomical tables of Sind and Hind' is a work consisting of approximately 37 chapters on calendrical and astronomical calculations and 116 tables with calendrical, astronomical astrological data as well as a table of sine values. This is the first of many Arabic Zijes based on the Indian astronomical methods known as the sindhind. The work contains table for the movements of the sun, the moon and the five planets known at the time. This work marked the turning point in Islamic astronomy. Hitherto, Muslim astronomers had adopted a primarily research approach to the field, translating works of others and learning already discovered knowledge.

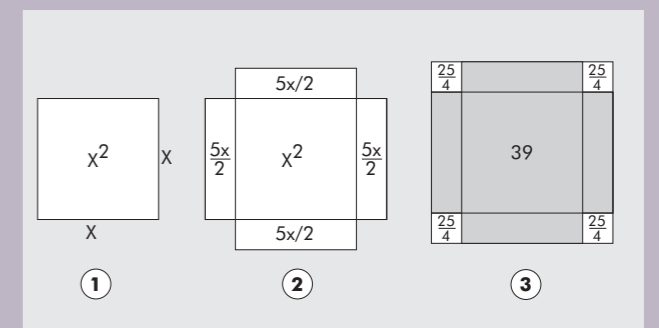


Geography

Al-Khwarizmi's third major work is his Kitab Surat al-Ard 'Book on the Appearance of the Earth' or 'The Image of the Earth' translated as Geography, which was finished in 833.

It's a revised and completed version of Ptolemy's Geography, consisting of a list of 2402 co-ordinates of cities and other geographical features following a general introduction.

Al-Khwarizmi Completes the Square





Al-Jazari

Innovative Mechanical Engineer

Biography

Born 1136 and lived until 1206 Al-Jazari was a scholar and mechanical engineer from Al-jazira, Mesopotamia, and lived during the Islamic Golden Age. He wrote a book called *Kitab fi ma'rifat al-handasiyya* (Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices) where he described fifty mechanical devices along with instructions how to construct them.

Like his father before him, he served as Chief Engineer at the Artuklu Palace, the residence of the Mardin branch of the Turkish Artuqid dynasty which ruled across Eastern Anatolia as Vassals of the Zangid rulers of Mosul and later Ayyubid General Saladin.

Some of his devices were inspired by earlier devices, such as one of his monumental water clocks, which was based on that of Pseudo-Archimedes.

Al-Jazari was quite evidently a master craftsman and regarded himself as one person in a succession of craftsmen and engineers.

He states this by describing in scrupulous detail how each device was constructed and much of the language that he used, which involved terms common amongst the craftsmen of that time, are in use right up to the present day in the technical vocabulary of Arabic. Furthermore, he expressed awareness of the need to develop machines with a better design and greater output than the traditional ones. He did not like to copy his predecessors work blindly. Rather, he was convinced only with innovative and ingenious designs and inventions.

Al-Jazari's main virtues were the ability to carefully manufacture and assemble components and to devise real improvements on the work of his predecessors. He did however have a tendency to be inconsistent in his dimension, to display some vagueness about the positioning of the equipment and failed to give coherent record of mathematical or geometrical processes.

Al-Jazari's hydropowered saqiya chain pump device



Mechanisms & Methods

While many of Al-Jazari's inventions may now appear to be trivial, the most significant aspect of Al-Jazari's machines are the mechanisms, components, ideas, methods and design features which they employ.

Camshaft

The camshaft, a shaft to which cams are attached, was first introduced in 1206 by Al-Jazari, who employed them in his Automata Water Clocks (such as The Candle Clock) and water-raising machines. The cam and camshaft later appeared in European mechanisms from the 14th century.

Crankshaft and crank-slider mechanism

The eccentrically mounted handle of the rotary handmill in the 5th Century BC Spain that spread across the Roman Empire constitutes a crank. The earliest evidence of a crank and connecting rod mechanism dates to the 3rd Century AD Hieraplois sawmill in the Roman Empire. The crank also appears in the mid 9th Century in several of the hydraulic devices described by the Banu Musa brothers in their *Book of Ingenious Devices*.

In 1206, Al-Jazari mechanism consisted of a wheel setting several crank pins into motion, with the wheel's motion being circular and the pins moving back and forth in a straight line. The crankshaft described by Al-Jazari transforms continuous rotary motion into a linear reciprocating motion, and is central to modern machinery such as the steam engine, internal combustion engine and automatic controls.

He used the crankshaft with a connecting rod in two of his water-raising machines; the crank-driven saqiya chain pump and the double action reciprocating piston suction pump. His water pump also employed the first known crank slider mechanism.

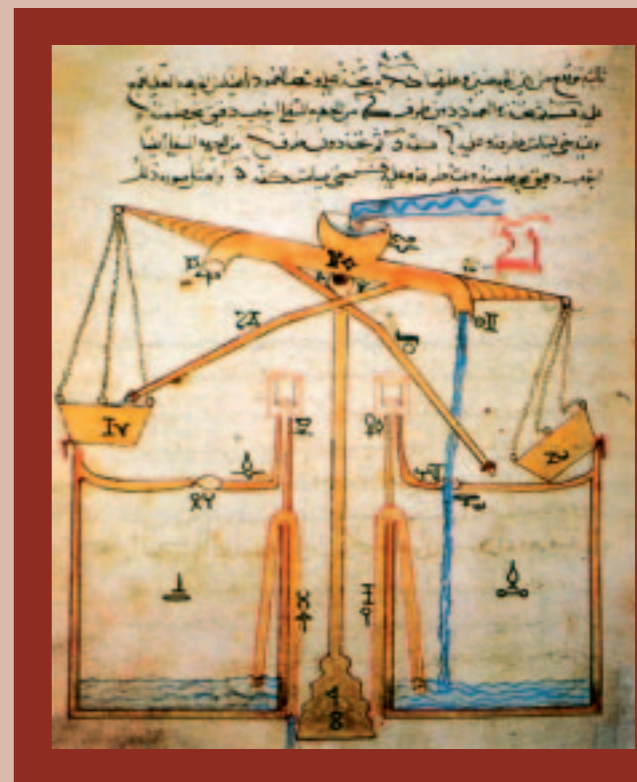


Diagram of a hydropowered water-raising machine from *The Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices* by Al-Jazari



Ibn Battuta

14th Century Traveller



Introduction

A famous Muslim traveller of the 14th Century who visited many different places more than 500 years ago.

For 29 years he journeyed through much of the world of Islam. It is believed that Ibn Battuta travelled more than 75,000 miles. Travelling then was often slow and dangerous. On his travels he met nearly every Muslim leader who ruled at the time.

Ibn Battuta was born in Tangier, Morocco in 1304. His parents were Muslim scholars who studied religious law. At the age of 21 he left Tangier and began travelling alone. He died in Fez around 1369.

Spanning thirty years and most of the known Islamic world he then extended beyond North Africa, The Horn of Africa, West Africa, Southern and Eastern Europe in the West, to the Middle East, South, Central and Southeast Asia and China in the East. Ibn Battuta is considered one of the greatest travellers of all time.

First trip was Hajj, or a religious pilgrimage to the Islamic Holy City of Mecca, in what is now Saudi Arabia.

On his way to Mecca, Ibn Battuta passed through North Africa and he visited Egypt.

In Alexandria he saw the Pharos Lighthouse, known as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Near Cairo he passed the pyramids of Giza.

After reaching Mecca, Ibn Battuta performed his religious duties. He stayed in Mecca for a few weeks, visiting holy sites and studying with Islamic scholars. Instead of heading home to Morocco he decided to continue travelling.

Ibn Battuta Timeline

Beginning in **1326**, Ibn Battuta journeyed through what are today Iran and Iraq. Around 1327 he returned to Mecca for a second Hajj and stayed there for about a year. He travelled not only to study Islam but also to learn about other cultures.

By **1328** Ibn Battuta was ready to continue his travels. He sailed south along the Eastern Coast of Africa, visiting Muslim cities along the way. He stopped his trip in the city of Kilwa, in what is now Tanzania. He then returned north along the African coast and continued onto the Persian Gulf.

In **1330** he reached Mecca for the third time. After his third Hajj, Ibn Battuta set out to travel through Anatolia, now the Asian part of Turkey. From there he travelled across the Black Sea. He visited the City of Constantinople, now Istanbul, Turkey, before heading west deep into Central Asia. He then crossed what is today Afghanistan and started for India.

In **1334** Ibn Battuta arrived in Delhi, India. He was given a high paying job for two and a half years working as a judge in the government of the leader. In this government position Ibn Battuta became quite wealthy.

In **1342** when on his way to China he was shipwrecked along the Southern Coast of India. Despite losing all his wealth he carried on with his journey. He visited what are now the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar (Burma) and Indonesia before finally reaching Beijing, the capital of China.

In **1346** Battuta sailed across the Mediterranean Sea to Andalusia, Southern Spain.

Then Between **1351** and **1353** he travelled across the Sahara, stopping in Mali in Western Africa.

In **1354** Ibn Battuta returned to Morocco for good. He settled in the city of Fez. He told his many adventures to a writer, who turned the events into a travel book.

How Ibn Battuta spent the remaining years of his life are unknown. He died in Fez around **1369**. His unmarked grave can be seen there today.





Malcolm X

Minister and Human Rights Activist

Biography

Malcolm X was born Malcolm Little and also known as El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, was an African American Muslim Minister and Human Rights Activist. To his admirers, he was a courageous advocate for the rights of African Americans, a man who indicted white America in the harshest terms for its crimes against black Americans. Detractors accused him of preaching racism, black supremacy, antisemitism, and violence.

Malcolm X was born in Omaha, Nebraska on May 19th 1925.

The events of his childhood, including his father's lessons concerning black pride and self reliance, and his own experiences concerning race played a significant role in his adult life.

By the time he was thirteen, his father had died and his mother had been committed to a mental hospital. After living in a series of foster homes, Malcolm X became involved in a number of criminal activities in Boston and New York City, in 1946 he was sentenced to prison.

While in prison, Malcolm X became a member of the Nation of Islam. After his parole in 1952 he quickly rose to become of the Nation's leaders, and for a dozen years was the public face of a controversial group. However, increasing disillusionment and conflict with Nation of Islam head Elijah Muhammad led Malcolm X to leave the Nation in March 1964.

Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jnr in 1964



Going Bad

Although he occasionally visited his brothers and sisters in Lansing, his own life now seemed so different from theirs. In early 1943 he lost his job at Smalls and for the next three years lived as a criminal. He worked as a drug dealer, first in Harlem and the up and down the East Coast, supplying touring bands of musicians. Later that year he committed a string of armed robberies in partnership with a man called Sammy, and narrowly escaped capture on several occasions. He took a lot of drugs and always carried a gun.

The police were watching Malcolm's every move and had a growing number of enemies in the underworld. It seemed only a matter of time before someone caught up with him, and in late 1945 he became involved in a dispute with a well known criminal called West Indian Archie. Just in time, he headed back to Boston. Malcolm's family were shocked when they saw how different he now was, but he showed no sign of wanting to change his ways.

He formed a burglary gang which performed a lot of robberies over Christmas 1945, but their luck ran out. Malcolm left a stolen watch with a jeweller for repair, when he returned to collect it the police were waiting for him. He was sentenced to 8-10 years in prison, more than double for such a crime.

Malcolm X Timeline

1925 - Born as Malcolm Little on May 19th in University Hospital, Omaha, Nebraska

1927 - Malcolm's brother, Reginald is born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

1931 - Enrolled in Pleasant Grove Elementary School (Kindergarten). Malcolm's father, Earl Little is run over by a car and killed

1938 - Enrolled in West Junior High School, in Lansing

1939 - Malcolm's mother, Louise Little is committed to the State Mental Hospital in Kalamazoo, consequently placing Malcolm in a juvenile home. He tells a teacher that his goal is to one day become a lawyer, the teacher "recommends becoming a carpenter as being a lawyer is not a realistic goal for a nigger". Enrolls in Mason High School in Mason, Michigan

1940 - Lives in various foster homes. Goes to Boston to visit his half sister, Ella Collins, notices her strong and independent character

1941 - Moves to Boston to live with Ella. Acquires various jobs, including shoe shining, dishwashing and soda jerking, also occasionally works for the New Haven Railroad. He is now exposed to the criminal world.

1943 - Malcolm moves to New York, specifically Harlem. Becomes a waiter at Small's Paradise. The US Army finds him unsuitable for the service on account of mental problems (apparently he behaved in an unsuitable manner on purpose, in order to avoid the draft). Known as 'Detroit Red'. Involved in criminal activities.

1944 - Indicted for larceny (Burglary), he goes back to Boston, given a three month suspended sentence and one year on probation.

1945 - Returns to Harlem, New York

1946 - Convicted of larceny (Burglary), breaking and entering and carrying a weapon. Malcolm is sentenced to eight to ten years in prison. He starts to serve the time in Charlestown Prison. Here he begins reading as many books as possible and educating himself.

1947 - Transferred to Concord Reformatory for 15 months. Influenced by some family members and impressed by letters from Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm converts to the Nation of Islam (not to be confused with actual Islam)

1948 - Transferred to Norfolk Prison Colony, Massachusetts, where there is a great library

1952 - Malcolm is released from prison after six years (instead of eight to ten) and meets Elijah Muhammad in Chicago. It is here that he receives the legendary 'X' from the Nation of Islam

1953 - The FBI opens a surveillance file on Malcolm X. He moves to Chicago to live with Elijah Muhammad. Becomes the Minister of the Nation of Islam's Temple Number Eleven, located in Boston

1954 - Becomes the Minister of Temple Number Seven, located in New York

1955 - Becomes the Minister of Temple Number Twelve, located in Philadelphia. First hears rumours of Elijah's adultery

1958 - Attracted to Betty Sanders, a nurse. He marries her in January. Their first child, daughter Attallah is born in November

1959 - Travels to United Arab Republic, Sudan and Nigeria. As an ambassador for the Nation of Islam, he travels to the Middle East and Ghana

1960 - Meets with Fidel Castro. His second daughter, Qubilah is born in December

1963 - Watches the March on Washington critically unable to understand why black people are excited over a demonstration "run by whites in front of a statue who has been dead for a hundred years and who didn't like us when he was alive". Because of his 'Chickens come home to roost' speech about the assassination of Kennedy, he is suspended from representing the Nation of Islam.

1964 - Begins collaboration on his autobiography with Alex Haley. Visits Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) for a week. Meets Martin Luther King Jr after a King news conference. Breaks away from the Nation of Islam and forms the Muslim Mosque Inc. Travels to Makkah and Africa as Malik El-Shabazz, whilst there after seeing the beauty of the unity of humanity, he embraces true Islam. He comes back to the US thinking differently about white people. He forms an organisation for Afro-American Unity. He returns to Africa and meets African leaders. His fourth daughter, Gamillah is born in December.

1965 - House is firebombed in the early morning of the 14th of February. On the 21st at 3.10pm directly after a beginning an address at the Audubon Ballroom he is shot several times, he is pronounced dead on arrival at Vanderbilt Clinic, Columbia Presbyterian Hospital. His body is moved to Bishop Alvin A. Child's Faith Temple Church of God in Christ for funeral services, eulogy by actor/playwright Ossie Davis, over 20,000 people attend. Bishops Child's and his family face constant threats at their home and church for agreeing to conduct the funeral. Twin daughters Malaak and Malika are born.

1997 - Betty Shabazz (formerly Betty X, born Betty Sanders), wife of Malcolm X, the only person he would trust with his life, dies in a fire allegedly started by grandson Malcolm, named after Malcolm X.



Moazzam Begg

Former prisoner who is now an Islamophobia Campaigner



The First Muslim to be released from Guantanamo Bay Detainment Camp and set up an Islamophobia campaign

Biography

Begg, born to Muslim parents, has dual U.K./Pakistani citizenship. His mother died when he was six. His father, Azmat Begg, is a former bank manager, born in India, who also lived in Pakistan before emigrating to the U.K. He is originally from Sparkhill, a suburb of Birmingham, and grew up in the Moseley area of Birmingham.

His father sent him to the Jewish King David School, Birmingham, from the ages of 5 to 11, because he thought it inculcated good values and was the next best thing to a Muslim education. He later attended Moseley Secondary School, Solihull College, and University of Wolverhampton.

During high school, Begg became a member of the Lynx Gang, a Birmingham street gang.

Begg described the gang as consisting of teenage boys predominantly of Pakistani origin, but also boys who were Algerian, Asian, Afro-Caribbean, and even Irish. They banded together to fight the far right, punk rockers, and skinheads after being teased and bullied by neo-Nazi skinhead anti-immigrant groups. He said "we did things that no good Muslim should," but that he rarely joined the fights. Though he did end up in court because of his involvement in a fight with skinheads.

Afghanistan/Pakistan, July 2001 – February 2002; arrest

With his wife Zaynab and three young children, Begg moved to Kabul, Afghanistan, in late July 2001. Taliban-ruled Afghanistan at that time protected Osama bin Laden, banned music and most games, beat women for improper dress, had fired all women in public service, and severely restricted the education and medical treatment of women. Yet as this was happening, Begg wrote in his autobiography that in 2001 the Taliban had made "some modest progress in social justice and upholding pure, old Islamic values forgotten in many Islamic countries." Begg now says it was his perception at the time, and since then he has criticised the Taliban for human rights abuses.

As The New York Times put it: "Despite the Taliban's status as an international pariah for its treatment of women and its hospitality toward al-Qaeda, Begg saw it as a fine, inexpensive place to raise a family."

"I wanted to live in an Islamic state—one that was free from the corruption and despotism of the rest of the Muslim world.... I knew you wouldn't understand. The Taliban were better than anything Afghanistan has had in the past 25 years."

He insists he moved to Kabul both because he was moved by the plight of the Afghan people living under the Taliban regime, and to fulfil his dream of being a teacher. Begg maintains he began sponsoring a school for basic education from the U.K., providing books, teaching materials, and classroom and playground equipment.

He says he was in the process of starting the school, and was going to be a charity worker for it. The school was to be for boys and girls, despite the fact that the Taliban regime opposed education for females and had not given him a licence. He says he also went there to build wells.

The Allied attack on Afghanistan began in October 2001, and following the Taliban's defeat, a U.S. Justice Department dossier on Begg indicates that he joined their retreat to the Tora Bora mountains, where he was "prepared to fight in the front line against allied forces", according to the Pentagon. While in Afghanistan, he admits to buying a rifle and handgun in August. But he said that he and his family evacuated to Islamabad in Pakistan for safety. Though he says he became separated from his family for three weeks on the way, ultimately joined up with several men who were led by a guide over the mountains into remote tribal areas of western Pakistan, and only then reunited with his family by mid-November.

Al-Qaeda's Derunta training camp, 15 miles from Jalalabad, was captured in November 2001. The Guardian and USA Today reported that a photocopy of a money transfer was found there requesting that a London branch of Pakistan's Habib Bank AG

Zurich credit the account of an individual identified as "Moazzam Begg" in Karachi, Pakistan, with a sum of money in sterling. The money order photocopy was found alongside al-Qaeda training books, listed targets for destruction, hand-drawn sketches of bombs, and bomb-building manuals. U.S. and Pakistani officials said at the time that they did not know who Begg was, but would try to find him. Begg maintains that he is unaware of such a transaction, and that no one has shown him the document.

In February 2002, Begg was arrested by Pakistani police officers on suspicion of links with the Taliban or al-Qaeda, at his rented home in Islamabad, in what his family maintains was a case of mistaken identity.

After a few weeks, the Pakistanis handed him over to American officers. He was bundled into the back of a car, and taken back to Kabul.

Detention in Afghanistan; February 2002 – February 2003

Begg was held at Bagram Theatre Internment Facility for approximately a year.

He says he was tortured in Bagram, in that he was hog-tied, kicked, punched, left in a room with a bag put over his head (even though he suffered from asthma), sworn at, and threatened with rendition to Egypt.

Contd.

Moazzam Begg Contd.

Detention in Afghanistan; February 2002 – February 2003 - Contd.

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said there was "no credible evidence that Begg was ever abused by U.S. forces", and U.S. intelligence officials insisted Begg exaggerated the harshness of his treatment. The Department of Defence conducted three investigations into Begg's abuse claims, and "found no evidence to substantiate his claims."

In a July 2004 letter he wrote of: "threats of torture, actual torture, death threats, racial and religious abuse", "cruel and unusual treatment", and that "documents, were signed under duress". He also wrote: "This culminated, in my opinion, with the deaths of two fellow detainees, at the hands of US military personnel, to which I myself was partially witness". Begg claimed that while at Bagram, he saw two other detainees (Dilawar and Habibullah) being beaten so badly that he believed the beatings caused their deaths.

He is featured in the 2007 documentary *Taxi to the Dark Side* talking about one of the deaths.

Detention in Guantanamo Bay; February 2003 – January 2005

He was transferred on 2 February 2003 to Guantanamo Bay.

CNN reported that leaks of intelligence reports alleged Begg spent time in an Afghan al-Qaeda training camp, where he learned to make bombs, and that he had been linked to a plot to attack the British Houses of Parliament. In an editorial in *Gulf News* Linda Heard said that Begg, who wrote his parents that he had no idea of what he was supposed to have done and was "beginning to lose the fight against depression and hopelessness":

"confessed to being part of a plot to spray the British Parliament with anthrax.... Begg's confession has been the cause for hilarity in certain circles; among those who know how difficult it would be to come up with a pilot-less drone, not to mention weaponised anthrax."

He was held in Guantanamo Bay for just under two years, often in solitary confinement. The U.S. government considered Begg an enemy combatant, and claimed that he trained at al-Qaeda terrorist camps in Afghanistan.

He was not charged with any crime, nor for the majority of the time was he allowed to consult legal counsel.

A 9th October 2003 memo summarising a meeting between General Geoffrey Miller and his staff and Vincent Cassard of the ICRC said that camp authorities were not permitting the ICRC to have access to Begg, due to "military necessity", an exception allowed for by the Geneva Conventions.

In a July 2004 letter, he said he was not tortured in Guantanamo, though the conditions were "torturous". Late in 2004, Clive Stafford Smith (a British-born lawyer working in the U.S.) visited Begg and said he heard "credible and consistent evidence" from Begg of torture, including the use of strappado. The Pentagon has maintained that torture is prohibited at Guantanamo Bay, that all credible allegations of abuse are investigated, and that "The United States operates a safe, humane and professional detention operation at Guantanamo that is providing valuable information on the War on Terrorism."

His American lawyer, Gitanjali Gutierrez, received a handwritten letter from him, dated 12th July 2004, addressed to the U.S. Forces Administration at Guantánamo Bay and copied to Begg's lawyers, among others, which U.S. authorities agreed to declassify. Its full text was passed to his British lawyer, Gareth Peirce. He insisted: "I am a law-abiding citizen of the UK, and attest vehemently to my innocence, before God and the law, of any crime – though none has even been alleged".

Release

The British government protested the Guantánamo tribunals, because due process rights were sharply limited. On 11th January 2005, the British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw announced that after "intensive and complex discussions" between the U.S. and the British government, the four British citizens remaining in Guantanamo Bay would be returned to Britain "within weeks". While they were still regarded as "enemy combatants" by the U.S. Government, no specific charges had been brought against them.

Bush released Begg as a favour to Prime Minister Tony Blair, who was being harshly criticized for his support of the Iraq war, reported The New York Times (based on information from U.S. officials it did not name) and CNN.

On 25th January 2005, Begg and the three other British citizen detainees (Feroz Abbasi, Martin Mubanga, and Richard Belmar) were flown back to RAF Northolt in west London, the U.K. on an RAF aircraft. On arrival they were arrested by officers from the Metropolitan Police, and taken to Paddington Green police station for questioning under the Terrorism Act 2000 by anti-terrorist officers. By 9.00 pm on 26th January, all four had been released without charge.

Book - 2006

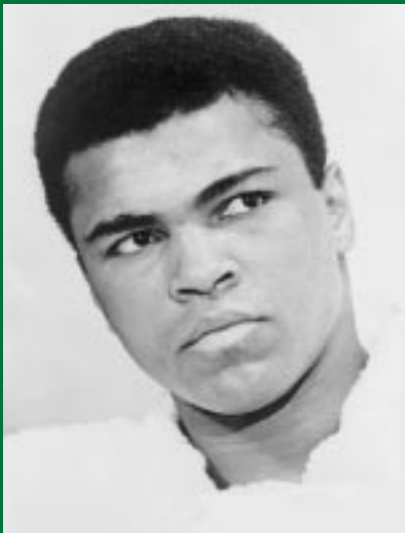
Begg co-authored a book released in March 2006 about his Guantanamo experiences. It was published in Britain as *Enemy Combatant: A British Muslim's Journey To Guantanamo and Back*, and in the U.S. as *Enemy Combatant: My Imprisonment at Guantanamo, Bagram, and Kandahar*. It was co-written with Victoria Brittain, a former editor of *The Guardian*.

The book followed a play that the two co-wrote, entitled "*Guantanamo: Honour Bound to Defend Freedom*", which played in London, New York, and Washington.

The book received mixed reviews. *Publishers Weekly* described it as a "a fast-paced, harrowing narrative". "Much of the Moazzam Begg story is consistent with other accounts of detention conditions in both Afghanistan and Guantanamo," said John Sifton, a New York based official from Human Rights Watch, who interviewed former Guantanamo prisoners in Pakistan and Afghanistan. "It is now clear that there is a systemic problem of abuse throughout the US military's detention facilities, not merely misbehaviour by a few bad apples." *The Muslim News* called it an "open, honest and touching account". Begg was named "Best British Author" for the book, at the annual Muslim Writers awards in March 2008.

But *The New York Times* reported "some notable gaps in Mr. Begg's memoir", in that he did not mention a previous arrest, nor some of his alleged ties to terrorism. *The San Diego Union-Tribune* said: "Begg has been less than forthcoming about his criminal past, his co-operation with interrogators, and his ties to terrorism". And Jonathan Raban, reviewing it for *The New York Review of Books*, wrote:

One has the sense of reading not a memoir but a résumé. Like most résumés, it feels airbrushed. It is a strategic (one might almost say a "campaign") biography, Begg's travels (during the time the U.S. maintains he was with the Taliban) get confusing, and plotting them on an atlas only adds to the reader's puzzlement. The gaps in his story, and they're more frustrating than downright suspicious cease at the moment when Begg enters captivity.... *Enemy Combatant* has been praised in Britain for Begg's outstanding liberality of mind and evenhandedness toward his captors.... Unfortunately, these relationships are rendered in long passages of direct speech, and Begg and/or his co-author are notably talentless at writing dialogue.... Perhaps Begg really did strike up a warm relationship with soldier Jennifer, but all one can say of the words on the page is that they are resoundingly phony. Only in bad fiction do people speak this way, and true though Begg's story may well be in its essential facts, it is very poorly served by line after line of rankly implausible writing.



Muhammad Ali

The World Heavyweight Boxing Champion



Biography

He was born Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr., January 17th 1942 in Louisville, Kentucky to parents Cassius Marcellus Clay Snr. and Odessa Grady Clay.

Young Muhammad Ali was not interested in boxing whilst growing up until one day in 1954 when Ali was only 12 years old, his bike was stolen when he was with a friend at the Columbia Auditorium. Boiling with rage, young Cassius encountered Joe Martin, a Police Officer. It was Martin who first advised him to learn boxing before he thought about fighting with anybody for revenge!

Shortly after this time Clay began training with Fred Stoner. With Stoner's training Clay then won six Kentucky Golden Gloves Titles and many more medals. Winning the Kentucky Golden Gloves made Muhammed Ali dream about being at the top of the boxing elite world, moreover made him dream about becoming the heavyweight champion. In his teenage years Ali dedicated himself completely to boxing.

Despite the great achievements, the racism was still affecting him, it was reported that after the Rome Olympics he was refused service at a 'whites-only' restaurant which led to him fighting a far right gang. As a result of this it's rumoured the Ali threw his Olympic gold medal into an Ohio river.

Heavyweight Title Fight

Soon after the young Ali's golden opportunity was been given to him and a fight against Sonny Liston was scheduled for for February 25th 1964 in Miami, Florida. The fight was nearly cancelled when the promoter, Bill Faversham heard that Clay had been seen around Miami and in other cities with the controversial Malcolm X, Clay had converted to Islam and this was going to be a problem for the fight from a promoters' prospective.

However Muhammad Ali protested against Bill Faversham and Bill decided to let the fight carry on on one condition that Ali would only announce his conversion to Islam after the fight and could not tell anyone. So the fight went on and on the weigh-in the young Ali was being boastful and making remarks of his opponent which he was well renowned for by this time.

By the time Clay was eighteen years of age he had over a hundred medals and over a hundred wins in the amateurs.

But even after being recognised in Kentucky young Muhammad Ali was racially abused by a few . However this just increased the drive and ambitions of young Muhammad Ali. He then went on to win the Amateur Athletic Union title. This achievement made Muhammed Ali the perfect candidate for the 1960 Olympics in Rome and went on to win the Light Heavyweight Gold Medal. This was a pivotal moment Muhammad Ali's life and was in essence one of the foundations of his professional career.

The young Muhammad Ali proved to be too quick and slick for Sonny Liston and made Liston withdraw from a supposed injury at the starting bell of round seven. Muhammad Ali not only had just won the title but had also become the youngest boxer ever to dethrone a reigning World Champion, and became World Champion, Ali was only 22 years old.

Professional Career

After returning from the Olympics, Muhammad Ali had decided to pursue his dream to become the heavyweight champion and turned professional. His first professional contest was on October 29th 1960 against Tunney Hunsaker, the Police Chief of Fayetteville, West Virginia which he won with a sixth round decision.

From the end of 1960-63 the young fighter had a spotless record 19-0. The young undefeated fighter had emerged victorious over the likes of fighters such as Jim Robinson, Donnie Fleeman, Alonzo Johnson, George Logan, Willi Besmanoff, Lamar Clark, Doug Jones and Henry Cooper.

After beating all his opponents the young Ali had become the top contender for the heavyweight title which was held by Sonny Liston and the vast majority of the boxing world and the public thought that Liston would defeat the young Ali with no problems.

Heavyweight Title Defences

Rematch against Sonny Liston (May 1965) In 1965, Lewistone, Maine Muhammad Ali who had now publicly announced his conversion to Islam and changed his name from Cassius Clay had a rematch with Sonny Liston, this time he knocked Liston out in the first round by a move what came to be known as the Phantom Punch.

His second title defence was on November 22nd 1965 against Floyd Patterson, Patterson lost by technical knockout at the end of the 12th round. On March 29th 1966 Ali won a 15 round decision against opponent George Chuvalo. Then on May 21st Ali went to England for his next two fights and defeated Henry Cooper by stoppage on cuts. On August 1966 he knocked out Brian London in the third round. Ali's next defence was against German southpaw Karl Mildenberger in Frankfurt, Ali stopped his opponent in round twelve.

In November 1966 Ali returned to the United States to fight his next opponent who went by the name of Cleveland 'Big Cat' Williams, Ali defeated Williams in three rounds.

On February 6th 1967 Ali fought Ernie Terrell. Terrell was punished for 15 rounds. In March 1967 Ali defended his title against Zora Folley and once again emerged victorious. Around a month later Ali would be stripped of his title for refusing to join the Army to fight against Vietnam and had his professional boxing licence suspended.

Contd.



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Ali stated that "War is against the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. I'm not trying to dodge the draft". Ali had announced it publicly that he was not going to participate in any kind of war.

For not showing up for the Army despite being called up for duty 3 times Ali refused and was then warned he could be punished as he was committing a criminal offence, Ali still refused and was arrested on the same day.

On June 20th 1967 the jury found Ali guilty, however he appealed against the verdict and whilst the case was re opened Ali was allowed to fight again and in August 1970 in Atlanta with the help of an American Senator he fought against Jerry Quarry and beat him in three rounds. He was then allowed to fight in New York and in December 1970 he fought Oscar Bonavena and stopped him in the 15th round.

Second Title Shot

Ali had become the contender for the heavyweight title against Joe Frazier and on the 8th March 1971 Ali met Frazier at Madison Square Gardens. This was being labelled the fight of the century as both fighters were undefeated at the time and were highly skillful boxers. The fight ended in the 15th round and Frazier had given Ali his first professional loss.

After this Ali fought a number of opponents on his own show called 'The Muhammad Ali Boxing Show'.

In 1973 Ali had suffered his next defeat from Ken Norton who also broke Ali's jaw, however Ali went on to win the rematch which directly led him to a rematch with Joe Frazier, although the title holder by now was George Foreman.

The bout between Ali and Frazier was held on January 28th 1974 with Ali winning a unanimous 12 round decision.

On October 30th 1974 Ali was set to meet George Foreman for a title shot known as 'The Rumble in the Jungle' promoted by Don King. With Foreman having knocked out both men who handed Ali his losses, Forman was the major favourite to win the fight. Ali caused a major upset in the boxing world by finishing Foreman in the 8th round and became World Champion once again.

In March 1975 Ali faced Chuck Wepner in a bout that inspired the original Rocky film. While it was largely thought that Ali would dominate, Wepner surprised everyone by not only knocking Ali down in the 9th round, but nearly going the distance. Ali eventually stopped Wepner in the fading minutes of the 15th round. Following a title defence with Ron Lyle in July Ali faced Joe Bugner, winning a 15 round decision.

On October 1st 1975, Ali fought Joe Frazier for the third time. Taking place in the Philippines, the bout was promoted as 'The Thriller in Manilla' by Don King. The anticipation was enormous for this final clash between the the two great heavyweights. Ali believed Frazier was "over the hill" by that point. Ali's frequent insults, slurs and demeaning poem increased the anticipation and excitement for the fight, but enraged a determined Frazier.



The Muhammad Ali Centre

Ali in retirement (left)



Ali's Presidential Medal of Freedom (right)



The fight lasted 14 gruelling rounds in temperatures approaching 100F (38C). Ali won many of the early rounds, but Frazier staged a comeback in the middle rounds while Ali lay on the ropes. By the late rounds Ali had reasserted control and the fight was stopped when Frazier was unable to answer the bell for the 15th round due to his eyes being too swollen to see. Frazier's trainer, Eddie Futch refused to allow him to continue.

Muhammad Ali had emerged victorious over his next six opponents before losing to Leon Spinks on February 15th 1978 in Las Vegas. However the following September Ali fought Spinks for the second time only to beat him and regain the Heavyweight title for a third time. After this victory Ali retired only to return the year after in 1980 to fight Larry Holmes to try and win the Heavyweight title four times. Ali refused to carry on at the opening bell of the 11th round.

In 1981 Ali lost a unanimous decision after ten rounds to Trevor Berbick, Ali had aged and was now past it, but he'd created a legacy and path for many to look up and follow.

Muhammad Ali defeated every top heavyweight in his era, which had been called the Golden Age of Heavyweight boxing and was named 'Fighter of The Year' by Ring Magazine more times than any other fighter. He is an inductee into the International Boxing Hall of Fame and holds wins over seven other Hall of Fame inductees. He is one of only three boxers to be named 'Sportsman of the Year' by Sports Illustrated.

In 1978, three years before Ali's permanent retirement, the Board of Aldermen in his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky voted 6-5 to rename Walnut Street to Muhammad Ali Boulevard. This was

controversial at the time, within a week twelve of the seventy street signs were stolen. Earlier that year a committee of the Jefferson County Public Schools considered renaming Central High School in his honour but the motion failed to pass. In time Muhammad Ali Boulevard and Ali himself came to be well accepted in his hometown.

He was the recipient of the 1997 Arthur Ashe Courage Award.

Contributions

In 1987 he was selected by the California Bicentennial Foundation for the US Constitution to personify the vitality of the US Constitution and Bill of Rights in various high profile activities.

Ali travelled to Iraq during the Gulf War and met with Saddam Hussein in an attempt to negotiate the release of American hostages. Ali received a Spirit of America award calling him the most recognised American in the world. In 1996 he had the honour of lighting the flame at the Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia.

Since he retired from boxing Ali has devoted himself to humanitarian endeavours around the globe. He's a devout Muslim and travels the world lending his name and presence to hunger and poverty relief, supporting education efforts of all kinds, promoting adoption and encouraging people to respect and better understand each other. It's estimated that he has helped provide more than twenty two million meals to feed the hungry. Ali travels on average, more than two hundred days per year.

Most of all Muhammad Ali has given inspiration to many people in the world to pursue their own dream, and that dreams can come true, he has also paved the way for many champions of today.



Roqaya Al-Gassra

First Muslim Athlete to win an Olympic Medal covered in a Hijab



Biography

She was born September 6th 1982 and is a Bahraini athlete who was one of the first women to represent Bahrain at the Olympic Games by taking part in the Women's 100 metres sprint at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens.

She won medals at the 2006 Asian Games and went on to run at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2009 World Championships in Athletics. She announced her international retirement in 2009, citing health reasons, but she was banned for two years for failing a drugs test that year.

How Roqaya Started

She discovered her talent for sport at school, where the other school children were always keen to have her on their team when they played basketball or handball, mainly for her speed. She was known as 'The Fast One'.

Roqaya started at school sports days, winning most events and winning the title of School Champion.

Her obvious talent prompted her teacher, Sawsan Tagawi to take the 17 year old direct to the Bahrain Athletics Association (BAA) in 2000.

At the time there were no athletics clubs open to women in the country, with only a limited amount of team sports available for women to partake. Attitudes relaxed and the BAA welcomed Al-Gassra warmly.



After a series of basic tests they agreed she did possess an impressive natural aptitude for the sport. But with no real coaching programme for women she was given a basic routine which consisted of running for ninety minutes, three days a week.

Only in 2003 did she begin an intensive training programme under the tutelage of coach Tadjine Noureddine. The Algerian who represented his country in the Men's 110m Hurdles at the 1993 IAAF World Athletics Championships, set her out on a structured six hours per day, six days a week routine.

Her father was a former footballer and understood the value of sport and Roqaya continued. As her training stepped up, so she rose to her challenge. She travelled to the 2003 Arabian Championships in Lebanon.

Medal Record

At the 2003 Arabian Championships in Lebanon she won the 100m and 200m sprints, she achieved Gold Medals for both events.

At the 2004 Asian Indoor Championships in Iran she achieved Silver Medals for the 60m, 200m and 400m sprints, and in Doha 2008 she achieved Gold for the 60m.

At the 2005 Asian Games in Doha she achieved a Bronze Medal for the 100m and Gold for the 200m.

She participated in these events dressed from head to toe in Hijab.

Being a Role Model

No matter what she achieves in the future, Al-Gassra has already made a huge difference in her country and the region. Since her success the BAA has seen scores of girls taking up athletics in Bahrain.

Relatively speaking, it's a small amount but a giant leap forward from where sport was in the country a few years ago.

Parents, particularly those with daughters regularly seek her advice. They want to know if it's safe to keep girls and boys mixing closely together and keep close to Islamic traditions.

She always re-assures them in her cheerful manner, quickly coming across a great role model to aspire to. Bahrain even hosted their first ever Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) Youth Championships for Girls. Hundreds of youngsters from Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and Kuwait will line up dreaming that they too might be the next Roqaya Al-Gassra.

